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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman)	(Republic of Korea)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman)	(Republic of Korea)

CONTENTS

- General debate on all disarmament and international security items (continued)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 65, 68 and 142; and 67 and 69 (continued)
GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. SINHASENI (Thailand): May I, on behalf of the Thai delegation, extend to Mr. Elaraby our warmest congratulations on his unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee. Our congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee. The Chairman's country and my country - Egypt and Thailand - have long enjoyed close and friendly relations. Having witnessed the able manner in which Mr. Elaraby has guided our deliberations, we have no doubt that his diplomatic skills and experience will enable him to guide the work of the First Committee to a successful conclusion. He can be assured that he will have my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Thailand joins other members of the General Assembly in welcoming the end of the cold war. The ideological barrier that threatened international peace and security has collapsed, while the trend towards dialogue and cooperation has been enhanced. Disarmament is one field that has certainly benefited from this new world order. The end of East-West confrontation and ideological rivalry has made possible unprecedented nuclear-arms reductions - reductions that were unimaginable just a few years ago. Entire classes of nuclear weapons have been destroyed, and further reductions are contemplated. These agreements and the reduced tension between the nuclear Powers have effectively diminished the possibility of a nuclear conflict - a spectre that has hung over mankind for the last four decades.

(Mr. Sinhaseni, Thailand)

Unfortunately, with the end of the cold war, new and dangerous challenges to word peace and stability have emerged. The breakup of States into "mini-States", the rise of nationalism and the conflicts arising from ethnic, cultural and religious rivalries that we are witnessing in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere are vivid examples of the new and dangerous challenges facing us. Meanwhile, the recent Gulf war brought home the dangers posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In 1992 we witnessed several positive developments in disarmament and arms control. Of particular importance were measures to curb and reverse the nuclear-arms race. We welcome the agreement reached between Presidents Bush and Yeltsin at their summit meeting in June to reduce their respective nuclear arsenals. We hope that further negotiations and cooperation will lead to further reductions. Also heartening are the announcements by the Russian Federation, France and the United States regarding moratoriums on nuclear tests.

(Mr. Sinhaseni, Thailand)

The proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is an issue of major concern. As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Thailand welcomes the accession by France and China to the NPT, which means now all five permanent members of the Security Council - acknowledged nuclear-weapon States - are now party to the Treaty. We also welcome the other recent signatories, including South Africa, as well as the NPT-related safeguard agreements successfully concluded by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This augurs well for the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT scheduled for 1995, less than three years away. Thailand joins other countries in expressing the hope that the NPT, which has been the main instrument in curbing nuclear proliferation for the last 25 years, will be extended. We also hope that due attention will be given to the issue of security assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon States as well.

As noted earlier, my delegation welcomes the decision of the Russian Federation and France to suspend their nuclear-weapon tests in 1992. We also welcome the recent announcement by the United States of a nine-month moratorium on nuclear testing and a commitment to achieve a complete ban on nuclear testing by 1996. As a firm supporter of a comprehensive test ban and as a sponsor of resolutions 46/28 and 46/29, Thailand joins in expressing the hope that these moratoriums will continue and that such temporary moratoriums will be turned into a permanent ban on nuclear testing.

Thailand fully supports the efforts and negotiations currently being undertaken by the Chairman of the partial test-ban Treaty Amendment Conference, Mr. Ali Alatas of Indonesia, and hopes that the current positive trends will help encourage States to exercise their political will and contribute to the successful conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

(Mr. Sinhaseni, Thailand)

My delegation particularly welcomes the recent successful conclusion of negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention. We wish to congratulate the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and in particular its Chairman, Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner of Germany, on their dedicated and untiring efforts. Tribute is also due to Australia for its invaluable contribution in preparing the draft texts of the Convention.

Thailand fully supports the draft Convention, and has decided to sponsor the draft resolution on it. We hope that it will be endorsed by the General Assembly during this session. However, we join those who have stressed the need for non-discriminatory implementation, and the need to ensure continued international cooperation, technology transfer and adequate protection of trade secrets, as well as provision for the development of civilian chemical industries, particularly in the developing countries.

In maintaining international peace and security, disarmament alone is not sufficient. Other complementary initiatives are also needed. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), which recommends constructive proposals on preventive diplomacy and peace-making. The Secretary-General specifically mentions the role of regional organizations and groups of States in dealing with matters which are appropriate for regional action.

In line with the Secretary-General's proposal for an increase in the role of Treaty-based organizations, the member States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have introduced a draft resolution (A/C.1/47/L.24) entitled "Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia" under agenda item 62 (b), "Regional confidence-building measures". We believe

(Mr. Sinhaseni, Thailand)

that the Treaty offers a framework which countries in the region can use as a means to promote long-term prosperity. It contains pertinent principles which are worthy of endorsement by the General Assembly. My delegation feels that this draft resolution is most timely, for it accords not only with the Charter but also with the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace". Other South-East Asian nations which have recently acceded to the Treaty - namely Viet Nam, Laos and Papua New Guinea - have joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, as have exactly 100 other Member States. We hope that the draft resolution, will receive the unanimous support of Member States.

My delegation cannot allow this opportunity to pass without welcoming the report which the Secretary-General presented to us this morning, entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7). We welcome this timely and valuable report. While his previous report, "An Agenda for Peace", was welcomed and has gained wide support among Member States, it has been said that the issue of disarmament was not part of the Secretary-General's mandate. No mention was made of, or emphasis placed on, disarmament, which is an issue of vital importance and one in which the United Nations is heavily involved. While we have not had time to study the report in detail, we fully support the Secretary-General's view that conflict resolution - that is, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping - as well as the added challenge inherent in post-conflict peace-building can be supported and strengthened by concrete arms regulation and disarmament measures.*

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* The Chairman took the Chair.

(Mr. Sinhaseni, Thailand)

We fully support the Secretary-General's suggestion that the three concepts of integration, globalization and revitalization can form the foundation of an enhanced international effort in the field of disarmament and arms regulation. We fully agree that the time has come for the practical integration of disarmament and arms regulation issues into the broader structure of the international peace and security agenda. We need to globalize the process of arms control and disarmament and to build upon and revitalize past achievements in arms regulation and reduction.

On the issue of arms transfer and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, my delegation fully agrees with the Secretary-General that:

> "one obstacle that stands in the way of effective global controls is the difficulty of objectively distinguishing between defensive and provocative arms transfers." (A/C.1/47/7, para. 32)

We agree that some mechanism must be found to reduce both the supply of, and the demand for, advanced weaponry, but in ways that would not undermine the security of States that rely on arms imports for legitimate defensive needs.

My delegation commends the Secretary-General for his timely and excellent report, and hopes that it will be given the same serious consideration by Member States as that currently being given to his report, "An Agenda for Peace".

In concluding, my delegation hopes that the work of the Committee will be marked by a spirit of cooperation and compromise, reflecting the new positive international political climate and the trend towards dialogue and cooperation. Again, let me reiterate my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Mr. BILOA TANG (Cameroon) (interpretation from French): My delegation would like first of all to express again to the Government of Egypt and the fraternal Egyptian people our sincere condolences and warmest sympathy on the losses and damage caused by the earthquake which recently shook Cairo.

Mr. Chairman, Cameroon and Egypt - your beautiful country - have long had excellent relations based on friendship and cooperation. The delegation of Cameroon is therefore pleased to join in the warm congratulations that have been extended to you and the other officers of the Committee on your election. There is no doubt that under your leadership our Committee will be able to work ever more effectively to strengthen international peace and security. You can count on our full cooperation in this endeavour.

With the end of East-West rivalry, the world finds itself at a crossroads. In the face of this new situation, there is a certain measure of agreement as to how the international community perceives its collective future. This new tendency to take a global view of our affairs gives rise to hopes which, regrettably, are often frustrated by events in the world which pose threats to international peace and security. To the hotbeds of tension resulting from the cold war have been added conflicts of a new kind resulting from the resurgence of nationalism and from ethnic and religious factors.

As the Secretary-General underlined in his report on the work of the Organization (A/47/1), and as the Heads of State and Government emphasized at the last summit meeting of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries at Jakarta, all of these developments that threaten international peace and security consume the energies of the international community to the detriment of high-priority tasks such as development and protection of the environment,

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

democracy and the defence of human rights, the struggle against drugs and the AIDS pandemic, and problems related to the situation of refugees and displaced persons.

My delegation considers that the efforts currently being made by the international community to find solutions to these numerous challenges must be enhanced. Hence we support the proposals made by the Secretary-General in "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) and once again invite the developed countries to honour the commitments they have undertaken towards the developing countries.

The military dimension of international peace and security also deserves to receive our full attention. The significant advances made in the field of disarmament since the end of East-West rivalry deserve to be acknowledged and encouraged. Since last year, in fact, progress made in the field of disarmament has been reflected in the Washington agreement between Presidents Bush and Yeltsin on substantial reductions in their armaments. My delegation encourages and invites the two sides to pursue their bilateral negotiations with a view to making even more far-reaching reductions in the sizeable arsenals which they still have in place.

In addition, the moratorium on nuclear tests decreed unilaterally by France, the Russian Federation, China and the United States of America should be extended indefinitely. To this end, the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear-Test Ban should be re-established within the Conference on Disarmament and should be given a mandate to bring to conclusion a treaty banning nuclear tests. If reactivation of this Ad Hoc Committee encounters difficulties, the Amendment Conference on a partial test-ban Treaty should be convened.

France and China - two of the permanent members of the Security Council - recently acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Cameroon welcomes this action, and invites those States that have

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

not yet done so to accede to the Treaty in order to bring it nearer to universality. Furthermore, Cameroon welcomed the accession of South Africa to the NPT. It is our hope that this country will strictly implement the safeguard agreement it signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in order to facilitate the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

The Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will begin its work in 1993. Cameroon, which supported the convening of the Conference, hopes that the Fifth Review Conference of States Parties to the NPT, to be held in 1995, will result in its extension for an indefinite period. The Second Review Conference on the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques was recently held at Geneva. Cameroon hopes that all countries will accede to this Convention and will strictly implement its provisions.

After many years of arduous negotiations, the Conference on Disarmament has finally completed the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. We welcome the conclusion of this Convention, and we are prepared to accede to it.

At its substantive session in 1992, the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus the guidelines and recommendations on objective information on military questions. My country hopes that implementation by all States of these guidelines and recommendations will have the effect of strengthening

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

transparency, and thereby encouraging, the limitation of armaments, and disarmament. The other items on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission should be brought to a satisfactory conclusion if all delegations show the same political will. This would apply to the items relating to the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and related areas, to the regional approach to disarmament in the context of global security, and to nuclear disarmament. Consideration of all these questions, which are of concern to the international community as a whole, within the Disarmament Commission should inspire the work of the Conference on Disarmament and should work in favour of increasing the membership of the Conference.

The murderous conflicts which are rocking some regions of the world, in particular the Gulf conflict of 1990, have demonstrated that the excessive build-up of conventional armaments constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a timely initiative. We hope that it will have the effect of limiting the proliferation of weapons. We would have hoped, however, that this Register would encompass not only the transfer of conventional weapons but also any weapon of mass destruction and information concerning the military strengths of States and their purchases related to national production. The efforts made so far in the field of disarmament deserve to be encouraged, although the objective of a world free of all weapons of mass destruction is still far from being achieved.

We therefore invite all the nuclear Powers and countries possessing and exporting weapons of mass destruction, not only to implement the agreements that are already in force in the field of disarmament, but also, and above

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

all, to display a genuine political will by removing major obstacles that stand in the way of achieving that objective.

Since the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, significant progress has been recorded in regional disarmament. The contribution made by the latter to global disarmament and the effects of disarmament on development have been established and reaffirmed by various relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. We must recall that confidence-building measures are the foundation of regional disarmament and that without them any regional policy in this area would be doomed to fail. It is in this context that groups are being formed in many regions of the world - due account being taken of the specific features of each region - to work towards regional disarmament by adopting appropriate confidence-building measures. These measures, moreover, meet the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace".

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

Convinced that the United Nations provides the proper framework for the achievement of collective security, the 11 States members of the Economic Community of Central African States - Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Zaire - have been engaged for several years, under United Nations auspices, in an in-depth examination of confidence-building, security and development in their subregion.

That joint undertaking led to the consensus adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/37 B of 6 December 1991 on regional confidence-building measures. In that resolution, while welcoming the initiative taken by our 11 States, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue providing assistance by, in particular, establishing under United Nations auspices a standing advisory committee on security questions in Central Africa.

I am pleased to say that the Secretary-General has carried out his mandate. I take this opportunity to express to him, on behalf of the 11 States members of the Economic Community of Central African States, our heartfelt gratitude. On 28 May 1992 the Secretary-General announced the creation of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa and appointed a permanent Secretary. An organizational meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee was held from 27 to 31 July 1992 in Yaoundé, Cameroon, under the auspices of the United Nations. At that meeting the Secretary-General was represented by Mr. Provoslav Davinic, Director of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, to whom we express our appreciation and gratitude for his dynamic contribution to its success.

That meeting led to the adoption of a programme of work including a series of confidence-building measures, which are set out in the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly on this subject

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

(A/47/511). Among them are: conclusion of a subregional non-aggression pact; elaboration of specific measures for promoting agreement on a balanced and gradual reduction of the military forces, equipment and budgets of the States of the subregion; agreement on the part of all States in the subregion not to produce, acquire or transfer weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; adherence by all States of the subregion to international legal instruments on arms limitations and disarmament; training, at the subregional level, in the management of emergency humanitarian assistance operations; strengthening and consolidation of the democratization process and promotion of respect for human rights in the subregion; creation of demilitarized zones and zones of peace in the subregion; assistance in connection with the restructuring of armies and redeployment of the military; establishment of a subregional centre for the training of peace-keeping personnel; and development of cooperation with training institutions specializing in the field of conflict prevention and the management of peace-keeping operations.

The States of Central Africa are convinced that those confidence-building measures can lead to a climate of peace and security favourable to economic and social development in their subregion. In that connection, they call upon the United Nations to provide, as it has in the past, the assistance necessary for the implementation of those confidence-building measures. That is the purpose of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.2, now before the Committee, submitted by the 11 States Members of the Economic Community of Central African States. We wish to thank all delegations in advance for their support for this important draft resolution.

If it is to succeed, the initiative taken by the States of Central Africa will require the cooperation of all. The contribution of States and of

(Mr. Biloa Tang, Cameroon)

governmental and non-governmental organizations with experience in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peace-keeping will be welcomed in our subregion.

Mr. MUTHANA (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like at the outset to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, and through you to the people of Egypt, our condolences and sympathy over the loss of life caused by the earthquake that rocked Cairo. We hope that God will spare Egypt further calamities.

On behalf of the delegation of Yemen I should also like to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that your experience in the disarmament field and your high diplomatic skills and personal qualities will enable you to guide the work of the First Committee to a successful conclusion. I am also pleased to congratulate the other officers of the Committee and to express our appreciation to the Committee's Secretary and the other members of the Secretariat. I should like to assure them all of our cooperation in facilitating their performance of their tasks.

We are also pleased to welcome the new members that are participating for the first time in the work of the First Committee.*

Our discussion of items relating to disarmament and national security at this session is being held in the context of developments that have taken place in the aftermath of the end of the cold war. Those developments have doubled the international community's responsibility of finding joint, appropriate and effective approaches in addressing disarmament issues and the questions of international security in line with with the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter, which is the fundamental framework

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* Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Muthana, Yemen)

for the regulation of international relations in a manner that fosters international peace and security.

The end of the cold war and the current détente in international relations have created a new international environment that affords a greater opportunity to enhance the role performed by the United Nations, its specialized agencies and regional organizations in the settlement of disputes between States by peaceful means, through dialogue, under the rule of international law. In that connection, we welcome once again the ongoing discussion of the Secretary-General's proposed Agenda for Peace. We hope that we will all deal with it seriously, for the cause of peace is of interest to all peoples and nations of the world.

It is gratifying that this session is being held at a time when concrete progress is gradually being made towards disarmament. We look forward to achieving the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. In that connection we welcome the announcement last June at the summit meeting between the United States of America and the Russian Federation, which has led to further reductions in stockpiles of strategic weapons. We also welcome the accession by France and China to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the endorsement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. We look forward to the extension Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty to be held in 1995, in the hope that the Conference will help in making all the States in the world parties to the Treaty and thereby bring about the total universality of the NPT.

(Mr. Muthana, Yemen)

We are hopeful that through that Conference a sincere commitment to the Treaty will be reaffirmed by all of us without exception with regard to complete nuclear disarmament, and that there will also be credible security guarantees for all, especially for non-nuclear-weapon States.

The situation of confrontation that existed for about four decades had diverted considerable resources to the military expenditures that resulted from confrontation and rivalry between the two blocs at that time. Today, after the achievement of real progress in the field of international relations with the end of that confrontation and competition, we hope that in the near future we shall see these resources being channelled to peaceful purposes and see more efforts being deployed to facilitate the transition to a civilian economy that will ensure prosperity for all humanity.

We wish to join others in welcoming the voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests and the progressive reduction of such tests declared by the Russian Federation, France and the United States of America. We hope that the other nuclear States will follow their example as a first step towards the achievement of the complete cessation of all nuclear tests.

The disarmament process requires, in addition to unilateral initiatives and bilateral negotiations, collective efforts with the full participation of all States on a basis of equality.

While we emphasize the importance of disarmament on the international level we are of the view that efforts and proposals relating to regional disarmament could form part of the overall international effort and should not be pursued separately. On that basis, we support all efforts and proposals

(Mr. Muthana, Yemen)

designed to achieve regional disarmament, because they could lead to the reduction of tension and contribute to confidence-building between the parties concerned.

It is important here to stress the need to take into account the particular characteristics of each region as this will help guarantee the collective security of all the States concerned in a satisfactory and just manner. In addition, there is the need to integrate the regional and global approaches to disarmament in order to ensure the consolidation of peace and security on the international and regional levels.

The continued focus on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction should be accompanied by an increased focus on reducing the volume of the conventional weapons that are being stockpiled in huge quantities. The threats those weapons pose to international peace and security are not less serious than those posed by weapons of mass destruction. While conceding the legitimate right of every State to self-defence, we are of the opinion that the maintenance of armed forces at a level that exceeds genuine security requirements makes it illogical to accept that such forces and weapons will be used in self-defence or for the preservation of peace.

Here we wish to reiterate that we in Yemen do not manufacture weapons. We hope that other States will limit the development and production of conventional weapons. Proceeding from this, my country supported last year the resolution on the Register of Conventional Arms. We have studied the Secretary-General's report on this matter, but wish to state once again that our support for the setting up of the Register principally stems from our desire that the Register should be universal in character and comprehensive and non-discriminatory in scope. By this we mean that it should cover all

(Mr. Muthana, Yemen)

aspects of production, development, stockpiling and proliferation and thereby achieve the real universality and effectiveness we wish for it.

We in Yemen, have a special interest in ensuring the prevalence of peace in our region and in maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring States. This is the posture adopted and declared by the Republic of Yemen in the very first statement of its Government after the unification of the two parts of Yemen on 22 May 1990 and to which we are committed in word and deed with regard to the settlement of border disputes with our neighbours. The border agreement we have concluded with the Sultanate of Oman is a tangible example of our commitment to friendly understanding and peaceful dialogue with a view to preserving the rights of all and ensuring for the region increased security and prosperity. This demonstrates Yemen's keen desire to achieve and foster security and cooperation.

We hope that the talks now under way on the issue of borders with Saudi Arabia will lead to an agreement that would guarantee the legal and historical rights of both parties.

The delegation of Yemen joins those who spoke before and welcomed the Draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. This draft Convention crowns the success of multilateral negotiations and efforts in the area of disarmament.

We are also pleased to join other delegations in thanking Ambassador Ritter von Wagner of Germany who chaired the chemical-weapons Committee in the Conference on Disarmament. The draft convention is an important step in the framework of the multilateral endeavours in the field of

(Mr. Muthana, Yemen)

disarmament. It will lead to the banning of a complete category of weapons of mass destruction under effective and authentic international supervision and monitoring.

In this connection, we wholeheartedly support the views voiced by Ambassador Amin Kherbi of Algeria in his statement before this Committee last week to the effect that it is ethically unjust and politically undesirable for the achievement of the universality of the Convention, which in itself is a laudable goal, to lead to the perpetuation or the worsening of qualitative and quantitative imbalances in the capabilities of States and that this is especially true of the Middle East region where the Israeli nuclear threat weighs heavily as Israel is the only State in the region that possesses nuclear capabilities and whose nuclear facilities are not subject to the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Discussion of issues of disarmament is still subject to the priorities determined by the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The highest priority is nuclear disarmament as nuclear weapons threaten humanity as a whole. Proceeding from this, and taking into account the fact that the Middle East region still lives under the threat of Israel's possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, we believe that any proposals for disarmament on the regional level in our region should take into account the security of all the States and peoples of the region at a minimal level of armament and in a manner that guarantees balance.

(Mr. Muthana, Yemen)

This makes it necessary for the international community to pressure Israel to end its gross recalcitrance and defiance of the international community and force it to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards regime of the IAEA in the interests of peace and security in our region.

Our country is located at the southern entrance to the Red Sea. The strait of Bab-al-Mandab is part of our territorial waters and is an important part of the Indian Ocean. Hence Yemen's interest in the implementation of the 1971 Declaration on making the Indian Ocean a nuclear-weapon-free zone, a zone free from any military presence that may jeopardize peace and security in the region. In order to achieve this goal, the Colombo conference on the Indian Ocean should be convened. In order to get to that stage, the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean should reconsider their participation in the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Committee in a spirit of responsibility.

In this connection, we support the strengthening of the Committee's mandate provided that its work in future should be connected with its task as specified in the 1971 Declaration.

Mr. NANDOE (Suriname): My delegation wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. You are a well-known scholar in the field of international law, and under your able leadership the outcome of the work of this Committee will certainly be a success.

By the same token, we congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

Our appreciation goes also to your predecessor, Ambassador Robert Mroziewicz, for his excellent work.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

Disarmament and international security items have many aspects and implications in our turbulent world. As some representatives have stated, the new international security environment has brought about not only hope and optimism but also apprehension and uncertainty.

The end of the cold war has enabled the major Powers to take some decisive initiatives to curb and reverse the nuclear-arms race and has paved the way for facilitating other disarmament efforts. However, in our ever-changing world, peace and security are still elusive, since parts of the world still face other types of threats and insecurity.

To our dismay, we have witnessed an upsurge of ethnic hatred, cultural strife and other forms of intolerance, and we are appalled by the blatant disregard for humanitarian principles.

Despite the international norms and principles that have been adopted, the shadow of conflict and suffering remains. Existing conflicts have a primarily regional character, but they can easily become global.

The Organization must continue to encourage States to adhere to the Charter, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to other relevant international instruments, such as those on international humanitarian law, since they are the best means for protecting and promoting human rights.

Regional conflicts show that the concept of international security cannot be considered only in military terms. A vast array of non-military threats exist in different forms, such as underdevelopment and uncertain prospects for economic growth. This trend underlines the perception that disarmament and development are interrelated and that efforts should continue to reduce defence spending in favour of development projects.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

Global as well as regional tasks have given the Organization an important, essential and constructive role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is this context that the international community should be congratulated on the draft text of the Convention on chemical weapons. This draft international Treaty, which was negotiated over two decades in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, is a historic document and a milestone in disarmament efforts. It is a global, comprehensive and verifiable Convention banning a whole category of weapons of mass destruction.

As the United States representative said earlier, those who contributed to the negotiations deserve praise and appreciation for their tremendous achievements.

The threat of the spread of nuclear weapons throughout the world has displaced the fear of super-Power nuclear conflicts on the international agenda. In 1968, when the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was signed, there were only five nuclear-weapon States. Today we face a different world, but the NPT remains the centerpiece of efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons have proliferated enormously. This proliferation took place despite the fact that the NPT requires non-nuclear-weapon signatories to forgo nuclear-weapons capability, not to transfer or receive nuclear-related technology and to submit facilities to IAEA safeguards.

In exchange, nuclear-weapon States agreed to cooperate in supplying nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and to negotiate on arms control. As long as the proliferation of nuclear weapons continues, it will remain a major threat to global security and stability.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we therefore urge that, in the multilateral context, priority be given to address the prevention of nuclear proliferation. In that respect, we look forward to the conference in 1995 - as called for in article 10, paragraph 2, of the Treaty - to review the Treaty and to decide on its extension.

Having stressed the dangers related to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, we would be remiss if we did not urge that existing weapons of mass destruction be totally eliminated. We therefore welcome the far-reaching reductions in strategic arms announced by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin in June 1992 and the French moratorium on nuclear testing.

In that sphere, the Latin American and Caribbean region has also achieved some positive results with the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Of the 33 Member States in our region, 24 are parties to that Treaty. In addition, the five states possessing nuclear weapons have, under Protocol II, undertaken the task of respecting the statutes on the denuclearization of Latin America and the Caribbean in respect of warlike purposes. They have also undertaken not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against parties to the Treaty.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

As the Permanent Representative of Brazil said in his statement, "Additional Protocol I to the Treaty of Tlatelolco has now been ratified by all extra-continental or continental States having de facto or de jure international responsibility for territories situated in the zone of application of the Treaty." (A/C.1/47/PV.3, p. 53)

Our region can be proud of its achievements, particularly in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The achievements related to the Treaty of Tlatelolco are to a large extent attributable to Mexico, and it is therefore fitting to express our appreciation for that country's contributions. My delegation welcomes this development and looks forward to the moment when our region becomes the first fully nuclear-weapon-free zone of peace.

In the past much attention was concentrated on the need to halt the nuclear-arms race, while the transfer of conventional weapons continued unabated. The relentless accumulation of armaments has not contributed to the security and stability of many States. In this context my delegation attaches great significance to the establishment of the international Register of Conventional Arms. In the report of the Secretary-General on this matter it is stated that the successful development and operation of the Register could be effective in the field of disarmament.

Accordingly, if the Register is fairly applied and worked out in concert by arms suppliers and recipients alike, it would foster a climate that is conducive to voluntary restraint and more responsible behaviour. We therefore hope that the resource implications for the maintenance of the Register, which is estimated at a total of $228,000 per year, will not be a problem. We urge Member States to provide all the information necessary for the timely and effective functioning of the Register.

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

Openness and transparency are crucially important as part of the process of building confidence. We hope that the establishment of the Register will contribute to confidence-building among States and be helpful in alerting the international community to excessive accumulations of armaments.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. KUNG (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)): International humanitarian law prohibits the use of means or methods of warfare that are indiscriminate or cause excessive injury, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has the mandate to work for the faithful application of this law and to prepare suitable developments. The ICRC has taken a number of initiatives in the past to develop treaties that implement the basic rules of international humanitarian law and has also taken steps to encourage a better application of them. One of these initiatives was the appeal made by the ICRC to Governments and to the League of Nations to take action to prohibit the use of chemical weapons, and this contributed to the adoption of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. We are therefore very pleased that States have decided to pursue more vigorously the goal of the total non-use of these weapons by also prohibiting their manufacture and stockpiling. It is certainly a great achievement that this treaty, which has been so carefully negotiated for this purpose, is now near adoption.

Another important initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross was to convene a conference of governmental experts to study the possibility of a treaty regulating certain weapons which could be considered excessively injurious or having indiscriminate effects. Those experts met in Switzerland in 1974 and 1976, and the result of their work was used as a basis

(Mr. Küng, ICRC)

for the United Nations Conference that adopted that weapons Convention in 1980. Given the important role that our institution played in the initial preparation of the Convention and in view of the mandate of the ICRC in general, we take a particular interest in the extent to which this Convention is being adhered to and its provisions applied in practice.

Perhaps the most pertinent of the Convention's Protocols, in the light of the situation we face today, is the second one, regulating the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices. Given the greater awareness that exists today of the immense problems created by the use of land-mines, in particular anti-personnel land-mines, it is worth while to recall that this Protocol provides some important basic restrictions on their use. First of all, it reaffirms the basic rules of international humanitarian law by outlawing the indiscriminate use of mines. It thus provides that they may be directed only at military targets and that all feasible precautions are to be taken to protect civilians. There are further specific restrictions on the use of remotely delivered mines, which may not be used unless their location is accurately recorded or unless they are fitted with an effective neutralizing mechanism. The Convention also requires that parties record all pre-planned minefields and endeavour to ensure the recording of all others. There is also a provision requiring parties to try to take the necessary measures to remove minefields or otherwise render them harmless after the end of hostilities.

Unfortunately, as we know only too well, the actual use of mines tends to reflect anything but conformity with these rules. We have seen such a massive, indiscriminate use of mines that there are now millions of them strewn around countries that have been involved in armed conflicts. These mines, and those who have been responsible for their deployment, have blindly

(Mr. Küng, ICRC)

killed or injured countless innocent victims, often children, and they continue to do so after the conflicts are over. Huge expanses of land are now uncultivable, preventing people from returning to their homes. The full extent of this scourge has become apparent in countries where mine-clearance teams are now facing an unbelievably slow and dangerous task. The experience of these teams shows that it takes years to clear even small areas, and casualties among mine-clearance teams are frighteningly high.

We need to ask ourselves why such a situation has arisen in order to work out the steps that absolutely need to be taken to prevent its worsening. Apart from the obviously indiscriminate use of these mines, the easy availability and relative cheapness of these weapons has clearly enabled their incredibly widespread use. The fact that the vast majority of these mines are not fitted with neutralizing or self-destruct mechanisms means that they continue to be dangerous long after the military purpose for which they were laid has expired. Finally, mine-clearing has become incredibly difficult because mines are increasingly manufactured so as to be undetectable. Unless urgent and effective action is taken to deal with this situation, it will only worsen, because even more of these devices will be laid in the same fashion in future conflicts.

At present only 32 States are Parties to the 1980 Convention - a truly disappointing rate of participation. Yet the present catastrophe caused by the indiscriminate use of mines proves just how relevant and important the provisions of this Convention are. States must now, as a matter of urgency, indicate their concern by ratifying the Convention themselves and by actively encouraging its universal ratification. They must also, of course, take the necessary steps to see to it that its provisions are taught to the armed forces so that the rules may be effectively carried out.

(Mr. Küng, ICRC)

Thought should be given also to an appropriate strengthening of the Convention. This could be undertaken during a revision conference, which is provided for in the Convention. Thus measures to secure implementation of the Convention's provisions - including, perhaps, verification - could usefully be considered.

The Convention also foresees the possible adoption of additional Protocols tc ensure that the development and use of new weapons will conform with the basic principles of international humanitarian law and with the humanitarian needs of society. The International Committee of the Red Cross continues to keep itself informed on such developments. In this connection I should like to mention that the ICRC will be publishing in one volume the four reports of the meetings of experts on blinding laser weapons and that this publication will be available, in English, French and Spanish, at the beginning of 1993.

Finally, serious thought should be given to the applicability of the rules laid down in the 1980 Convention to non-international armed conflicts. At present the Convention applies only to international armed conflicts, but the majority of today's conflicts are either internal or are an internal-international mixture. Many of them last for very long periods, creating severe problems such as we see in relation to the use of mines. Surely the need to avoid this extent of human suffering transcends the academic or legal distinction between international conflicts and internal conflicts. We need to recognize the importance of restraining the indiscriminate or excessively cruel use of weapons in conflicts of all types.

In this respect, the wishes of the ICRC and the wishes of those working in disarmament are the same - namely, to take practical measures aimed at

(Mr. Küng, ICRC)

solving the real problems we face. We trust that every effort will be made to find the most effective solutions and to implement them.

The ICRC has published today a concise brochure on mines. Entitled "A Perverse Use of Technology", it comprises a text that is to the point and pictures that are not pleasant. Copies of the brochure are available at the entrance to this room.

Mr. KABIR (Bangladesh): May I extend to Mr. Elaraby of Egypt our congratulations on his unanimous election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. With his vast experience, proven diplomatic skills and expertise in the broad areas of disarmament and international security, we are assured that the Committee's deliberations will be fruitful, and its outcome constructive. I should like also to convey our congratulations and good wishes to the other officers of the Committee - Vice-Chairmen Pasi Patokallio and Dae Won Suh and Rapporteur Jerzy Zaleski.

On a more sombre note, I should like to express our condolences with regard to the tragic loss of life and damage to property wreaked on Cairo by the recent earthquake. Bangladesh and Egypt enjoy fraternal and most friendly relations, and the bereaved and stricken people of Cairo are very much in our thoughts and prayers.

We are living at a time of epochal changes that have transformed the nature of international relations. It is a singular phenomenon that changes of such magnitude, range and scope - changes such as one might envisage only in the aftermath of a major war - should come about peaceably. It is as though the evolutionary process of decades has been concertinaed into a space of months.

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

We welcome the fact that the era of the cold war is over and that the painful period of ideological antagonisms can now, it is to be hoped, be relegated to the pages of history. This development has had a salutary impact on the international-security environment, and perhaps it has also - albeit less directly - served as a catalyst to strengthen the forces of democracy across the globe.

Yet, in the midst of hope, one can say most emphatically that the millennium is not just round the corner. The recrudescence of ethnic antagonisms, conflicts rooted in religious, linguistic and even cultural differences in various parts of the world, terrorism and problems related to drugs are obstacles to peace and pose threats to security. But a more subtle and insidious threat to peace arises from the widening of North-South disparities - an issue that must be addressed with all earnestness in this world forum.

Notwithstanding the emergence of new problems and the persistence of some older ones, there has never been a more propitious time to address in substance issues related to security and disarmament. Under-Secretary-General Petrovsky put it succinctly in his remarks when our general debate began. He said that at the time of the cold war the endeavours were

> "aimed primarily at maintaining a balance of forces between the two major alliances and at averting the possibility of a nuclear war."
> (A/C.1/47/PV.3, p. 9-10)

In today's infinitely more positive international environment there is genuine and widespread expectation and desire that nations should collectively and severally - in the words of Mr.Petrovsky -

"really push the process of genuine disarmament forward". (ibid.)

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

This surely lends importance and a sense of urgency to our task. History abounds with instances of squandered opportunities that could only be redeemed at great cost.

I should like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the Secretary-General on the issue today of his report entitled "New dimensions of arms regulations and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", contained in document A/C.1/47/1, which is dated 23 October 92. This document fittingly complements the Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace", demolishes the notion that disarmament is a vision for futurity and quite appropriately underscores its importance - indeed, its urgency - in the post-cold-war era.

Linked together, the three concepts of integration, globalization and revitalization can indeed be the foundation stone of a new structure of disarmament and arms regulation that will focus on the burgeoning conflicts in the world today, the resurgence of which even bipolar understandings have not been able to contain.

General and complete disarmament is, for us, a constitutional principle. It is a central objective of our foreign policy. We therefore wholeheartedly welcome the advances that have been made in the fields of arms control and disarmament. However, we are only too conscious that there is still a long way to go.

Significant progress has been achieved in the fields of the control and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are happy that the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) has been completed. It is surely a pointer to the vastly improved international-security environment that START has already been superseded by the agreement of June 1992 between Presidents Bush and Yeltsin

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

to effect even greater reductions in their nuclear stockpiles. Equally symptomatic is the manner in which the issue of split control over nuclear weapons in the wake of the disintegration of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was tackled and resolved. It is a matter for satisfaction that Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine will become parties to START and that all three States have given an unambiguous commitment to eliminate nuclear weapons from their soil and become parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear States.

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been variously described as the cornerstone or linchpin of the international nuclear non-proliferation régime. With the accession of France and China, all acknowledged nuclear-weapons States are now party to the NPT. This is a development to be welcomed.

Preparations should soon commence for the 1995 NPT Extension Conference. We look forward to participating in the process.

The NPT, even with its imperfections and anomalies, is an important step towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. We would like to see it extended and further strengthened. Non-nuclear-weapons States should have clear guarantees against any nuclear threat. Confidence-building among non-nuclear States would largely depend on a comprehensive, progressive but speedy thrust towards elimination of all nuclear arsenals. Admittedly the process has to be handled with utmost caution so as not to put human lives and the environment into jeopardy in the dismantling operation.

We welcome the moratoria on nuclear-weapons testing by France, Russia and the United States. We hope that they will be extended and will lead eventually to negotiations for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban treaty. We hope the other nuclear-weapons States will also suspend weapons testing. Certainly it would be most fitting if nuclear-weapons testing continued to be suspended at the time of the NPT Extension Conference in 1995.

Regionally also there have been forward movements in nuclear non-proliferation. Ratification of the NPT-related safeguards agreement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the bilateral agreement between the Democratic People's Republic and the Republic of Korea on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, developments in Latin America, including a full scope safeguards agreement between Argentina, Brazil and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), French ratification of Additional Protocol I of

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the decision by Argentina, Brazil and Chile to incorporate themselves in the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America, are certainly very heartening developments. Regional efforts can supplement and reinforce global efforts at arms control.

A most important issue to be addressed by our Committee is the draft chemical weapons Convention. After prolonged and often tortuous negotiations, the Conference on Disarmament has negotiated an agreed text. We commend the members of the Conference on a job well done.

The draft chemical weapons Convention is an important first in the field of multilateral disarmament. It is the most comprehensive multilateral disarmament treaty ever to be negotiated that prohibits an entire category of weapons of mass destruction in a non-discriminatory manner, with a well-defined verification régime. As a sponsor of the draft resolution to adopt the Convention, we hope that the largest number of States will wish to be original signatories when the Convention opens for signature in Paris early next year.

The Convention's provisions relating to verification and its non-discriminatory character could serve as a model or precedent for future disarmament treaties or for amending existing ones. It is important, though, that certain concerns expressed by developing countries during the negotiations, especially those relating to access to chemical technology and supplies, be kept in mind when the Convention enters into force.

A major focus of the General Assembly debate has been on the imperative of curbing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The whole purpose of arms control and disarmament is to ensure security at the lowest levels of armaments. Arms control cannot be divorced from political and security perceptions and strategies of nations. Nations do not reduce their stockpiles

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

of armaments because it is morally laudable to do so, or as an act of magnanimity. They will do so only if it is in keeping with broad political strategies, objectives and concerns.

In this regard the importance of confidence- and security-building measures cannot be overemphasized. The new Vienna Document of 1992, the decision of the Helsinki Summit to establish a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) forum for security cooperation and the Open Skies Treaty are welcome developments in this field.

In the fields of arms control, disarmament and, especially, confidence-building, regional organizations can play a pivotal role to supplement global efforts.

Bangladesh had a pioneering role in the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The annual SAARC Summit will be held in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, in December this year.

The basic thrust of SAARC has been economic, social and cultural. The stress is on collective self-reliance, exploitation of complementarities and people-to-people contacts. In South Asia, we have had to contend with certain inhibitions of the past and we all agreed on a step-by-step approach that would graduate progressively to more cooperation and greater confidence or, in other words, a "virtuous circle".

It is our view that SAARC has lived up to public expectations. Bilateral and contentious issues are specifically precluded by charter from the purview of SAARC. However private discussions and meetings outside the ambit of SAARC do take place at the official and political levels when SAARC conferences are held. Important issues have often been mooted bilaterally at different SAARC meetings over the years, contributing to regional confidence-building.

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

It has long been appreciated that there also exist very real non-military threats to security and stability. More than two decades ago the Brandt Commission cautioned that the security of the North could be imperilled by instability in the South. More recently the Security Council meeting at the Summit level unequivocally declared that non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields posed threats to peace and security, and accorded the highest priority to the solution of these matters. The recent Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in Jakarta, similarly identified the widening North-South gap as a threat to international security and stability.

With the end of the cold war there was legitimate expectation of a peace dividend to address development problems of developing countries. The indications unfortunately are that it will take some time for the peace dividend to materialize.

We do feel that a new, comprehensive and holistic approach to security, disarmament and development issues is warranted. Security and development are inextricably and intricately intertwined and interlinked. Peace and security are inseparable and development is the obverse aspect of peace. We share the view so eloquently expressed by the representative of Peru that there is a patent need for an integrated approach to the fundamental issues of disarmament, security and development and that the First Committee is the best equipped United Nations body for this task.

The 1992 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) calls for the diversion of funds from military to human needs. The report maintains that a reduction of 3 per cent in defence expenditure in industrial as well as developing countries during the 1990s

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

would yield as much as US$ 1.5 trillion for development by the year 2000. A small development tax levied on trade in armaments should also yield substantial funds. Whether from the peace dividend or until it materializes from other sources, availability of funds should not pose an insuperable problem. What is needed is the political will for a dynamic and comprehensive programme of action for development. To quote what our Prime Minister, Begum Zia, said at the Tenth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in Jakarta:

"Our search for peace and security will remain elusive if economic stagnation, deprivation and disparities persist".

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

We concur with the view that the three areas likely to be the focus of activity for the international community in the coming years are the environment, the conversion of military spending to civilian production and the problems of the third world. These are not unrelated issues, and we hope that they will not be treated differently. We may not be able to move forward as swiftly as we might wish, but let us not lag behind because of complacency generated by the sudden end of the cold-war era.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his kind words of sympathy expressed to the Chair.

In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the Committee will conclude its general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items on Wednesday, 28 October. According to the programme of work and timetable, the Committee will begin its second phase of work - the consideration of draft resolutions under all disarmament and international security agenda items - on Thursday, 29 October. A total of 20 meetings will be available for this phase of the Committee's work, from 29 October to 11 November. I urge those delegations wishing to introduce draft resolutions or to comment upon them during that period to put their names on the list of speakers as early as possible. A number of delegations have already indicated their intention to speak at that stage of the Committee's work, and the Secretariat has taken note of those requests.

I now call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that the following Member States have become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1, "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons": the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Israel.

The meeting rose at 4:50 p.m.